

# Sugar Cane as a Florida Staple Crop

By C. K. McQuarrie.

Every farmer in Florida should see to it that he plants some sugar cane, because it is a well-recognized fact that as a staple crop it is one of the most most profitable that the general farmer can grow. And it has the particular distinction of being suitable for the different soils prevailing over the whole state. There is therefore no reason why every farmer should not have a patch of sugar cane to provide his family with the necessary syrup for table use and supply the home market and if any surplus remains after these are supplied ship it to other markets as high-grade Florida syrup is in demand in all the markets of the country.

**Preparation of Soil.**  
To the end of getting a good crop, the soil must be well prepared by early breaking with a plow that will turn under all the vegetable materials on the land.

The practice of some farmers of burning the trash left from previous crops to facilitate plowing is to be condemned in the strongest terms, because in doing this the farmer is destroying the source of humus that is so necessary in all crop production. It is the humus to hold moisture, fertility, and the necessary oxygen that determines to a large extent the amount of crops produced.

The matter is inseparably connected with the question of humus and the facts concerning the real relation of humus to crop production is not considered or understood by the general farmer as it should be, hence the practice of burning the very materials that they should strain every effort to preserve and use as it should be used.

The breaking of the land for all spring planted crops should be done before the first of January so as to give time for the plowed-under vegetation to become humus and allow the soil to settle back to its normal condition before planting time.

Should any rains occur between the breaking of the land and planting time a crust will form on top of the soil. If this crust is allowed to remain unbroken considerable loss of moisture will occur from evaporation. It is therefore advisable to use some tool such as a harrow or weeder to break this crust after every rain, thus insuring the retention of the moisture in the soil as well as the soil-aeration secured in the process.

**Fertilizing the Crop.**

Sugar cane is a gross feeder of soil fertility and to get satisfactory yields we must be liberal with out fertilizer. The amount applied should, however, be determined by the depth of break-



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ing and the mechanical conditions of the soil.

Soil well prepared and with considerable humus in its composition should get at the rate of at least one hundred pounds per acre for every inch the land has been broken. For instance, if plowed six inches deep, use six hundred pounds per acre, and so on. This fertilizer should analyze five per cent ammonia, six percent phosphoric acid, and ten per cent potash. Apply this fertilizer broadcast on fresh worked soil about one week before planting the crop, mixing it well in the soil at time of application. Three per cent of the ammonia in the raw materials of this fertilizer should be from some organic source. Cotton seed meal is best because of its slow availability and the other two per cent should be applied of nitrate of soda as a top dressing about the first of August or at the time the crop begins jointing. The source of the potash used should be sulphate of potash, as the chlorine in the nitrate or in kainit tends to give a dark colored syrup and of poor flavor.

**Seed an Important Matter.**

The use of the best seed is a very important matter towards getting a large yield. A prevailing habit among a great many farmers of using last year's stubble crop for seed is not to

be recommended, because the vitality of this class of seed is low, and while the general supposition is that the short-jointed type of this seed gives a better stand, this is more than set-off by poor quality. In selecting seed we should see to it that it is of the very best available. Joints should be medium in length and the buds well-matured, and when bedding seed cane for next year's crop we should select the most thrifty and vigorous spot in the field.

## How to Plant.

When ready to plant, lay off furrows six feet apart and opened up about as deep as the land was broken. Cut the cane into three or four joint lengths and lay in the furrow, and if plenty of seed is available, lap them a few inches at ends. Cover slightly at first, just enough to insure sufficient moisture for germination of the bud and as the young canes set to growing in this furrow keep working the soil towards them until the furrow is filled and the land is level, and every time any cultivation is done be sure and work the middles as well as the rows, so as to preserve moisture. This deep planting insures a strong, vigorous, and abundant root system of the crop which is a main essential towards a large yield. It also prevents a tendency to being blown down during the high winds of September and October in that the roots are well anchored in the soil. The deep furrow and shallow covering enables the soil to get warmed earlier than under the old method of shallow furrow and deep covering and as sugar cane is a tropical crop, the early warming of the soil gives a good send-off at the very beginning.

Only shallow working tools should be used in the cultivation of the crop as the roots tend towards the surface of the soil and any tool that runs more than a couple of inches deep is apt to destroy a large number of roots. A weeder of the adjustable type is the best tool to use. Failing a weeder, sweeps on a cultivator set to run shallow is the next best.

## Cultivation of the Crop.

Cultivation of the crop should be systematic, and continued after every rain until cool nights begin. The general methods practiced by our farmers of so many workings and then laying by the crop does not belong to modern agricultural practice, for as long as one knows the cultivation of the crop is going to insure its yield, so long should it be continued. The aeration of the soil from the stirring if gets in the cultivating process promotes and stimulates its bacterial life, which is so necessary for the production of plant food for the growing crop roots.

Once every ten days is not too often to cultivate the crop, whether it rains or not, but should a rain occur immediately after a cultivation, the process should be repeated right away, as the crust formed by the rain will cause a rapid evaporation and the sooner that crust is broken by cultivation, the better.

# THE CLIMATE OF SANTA ROSA IS DESIRABLE

CONDITIONS ARE IDEAL FOR FARMING AND STOCK-RAISING, AND SEVERAL CROPS MAY BE GROWN DURING THE YEAR.

The climate conditions of Santa Rosa county are nothing short of ideal for growing purposes, stock raising, and for all the pursuits of the husbandman. The mean annual rainfall is 56 inches, and the mean annual temperature 68 degrees. The average daily maximum is 75 degrees, and the average daily minimum 61 degrees. The driest month in the year is May, when less than three inches of rain may be expected, the wettest months or the "rainy season," occurring in July and August, with a rainfall of slightly over seven inches to the month.

The season of the year when killing frosts may be expected, dates from December 8th to February 21st, and light frosts are looked for between the tenth of November and the twentieth of March.

Santa Rosa county has a delightful "year-round" variety of soft, beautiful climate, which makes her one of the greatest of the great sections in the south, which are awaiting the development of their resources.

## Same Old Argument.

"Woman's place is the cave," the cave man said. And he drove his wife back with a clip on the head.

We've improved our homes since then a bit;

But man's arguments haven't changed a whit.

(Louisville Courier-Journal.)

## Depends.

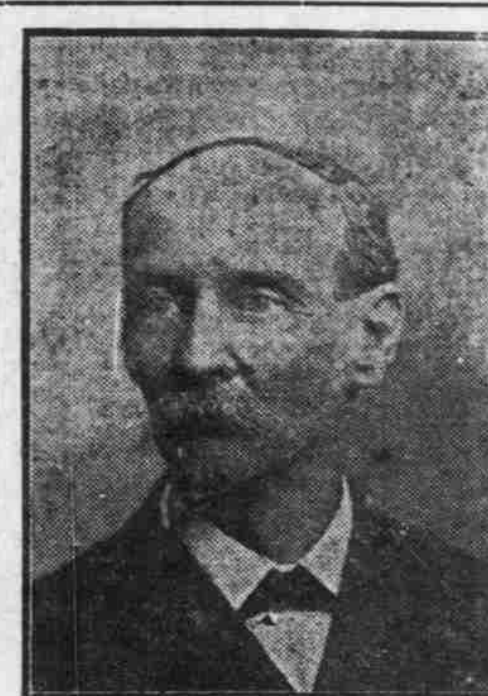
"Don't you think it would be a good thing if our legislators were limited to one term?" "It would depend on where the term was to be served."—Chicago Record-Herald.

# REMINISCENCES OF SANTA ROSA COUNTY

An Old-Time Political

Barbecue.

By Judge Chas. H. Laney.



JUDGE CHAS. H. LANEY.

I am not writing this article for the purpose of saying unkind things about Santa Rosa county; let someone who has not been treated so kindly by her people do this. I have been going to Santa Rosa county for over thirty years and have had my foot on nearly every section of land in the county, and have been in over half of the homes of the people who have lived there for a quarter of a century back. Some of the best friends I have ever had in the past are dead and gone and some of the best I have today are living in this county now.

Santa Rosa has always been a patriotic county and in proportion to population sent more men into the Confederate army than any other county in the state of Florida. Many of these volunteers enlisted in Alabama regiments and are not properly credited to the state of Florida. Therefore, the statistics do not necessarily show the true facts.

Santa Rosa has always taken a great interest in the politics of the state. The leading politicians of the county twenty-five years ago were Judge Chas. H. Laney, George McWhorter, Charlie Perrenot and Jack Adams. All these are dead except Jack Adams, and he has been away from the county for several years. McWhorter was one of the brightest men in Florida, a finished orator and an accomplished lawyer, who afterwards was judge of the supreme court of the state. Charlie Perrenot was one of the most unique characters I have ever known. No man ever lived in the county who exercised his influence. He was brave and uncompromising and the most loyal man to his friends I have ever known. Jack Adams was a business man pure and simple, but a born leader of men.

The old time barbecue was an institution of the South that has long since passed away. I attended one in Santa Rosa county many years ago, up near the Alabama line at an old mill site, which has since passed away.

Florida was just beginning to emerge from the reconstruction period and the white man beginning to assume his rights. A general election was in progress and this barbecue was given near the line of two states and was given to draw the crowd from both communities.

Preparations to feed the crowd had been going on for several days, and hoes, lams, goats and pigs had been slaughtered the day before. An experienced barbecuer from an adjoining county had been cooking for twenty-four hours over the live coals in a long trench, and savory odors filled the air. Huge piles of bread, pies, and cakes piled up on the long tables in the hollow squares under

a great favorite in this section. The Rev. Ebenezer Watson, the cold water candidate for superintendent of public schools, next rose, but receiving very little applause, he sat down early. Then the band played "Hail to the Chief," and the governor arose. The presence of a real live governor in the piney woods set the crowd a yelling vociferously and his speech was considered the great event of the occasion.

While the next speaker was endeavoring to explain his vote in the senate on a certain bird law, two dogs got to fighting under a wagon near by. It seems that a brindle dog from Florida jumped on a yellow cur from Conecuh county, Alabama, and was chewing off his ear. The confusion was intense and Squire Lawson, chairman of the meeting, ordered one of the executive committee to go out and stop the dogs. The executive committee kicked the dog from Florida, then the owner of the dog knocked down the committeeman, and the band had to strike up a popular air to stop the confusion. The fight went on until it was decided to announce dinner in order to restore peace. The meeting was called off until 2 o'clock, at which hour the United States senator was to speak and he was to be followed by the spell binder.

After dinner the United States senator made his speech for which he received much applause. The band played again and then the spell binder came on. The Hon. Jim was known the county over, and as the squire said, needed no introduction. He complimented the ladies and flattered the children. He spoke about the dignity of labor, saying that he had worked when he was young. "This is a community of farmers, I understand," said he, "and I am glad of it, for once I was a farmer, too. I could tie a hame string when I was ten years old, and many a time I have driven home the cows from the pasture up through the long, shady lane. I have seen the peafowl spread its gaudy tail in the morning sun, heard the guinea fowl cackle on the barn yard fence and the inquisitive pig squeal as he got fastened between the rails while trying to enter the peach orchard. There is something in this life on the farm that develops character. Look at all of the great men who have come up from the farm to make this country famous. Somehow strolling through the fields by day and studying the stars by night, listening to song birds and studying flowers, calls all of your genius into being."

Here someone in the crowd bleated like a sheep. It was whispered around that the orator had once stolen a sheep in Alabama years ago, anyhow the speaker quit.

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